Richard Gallen
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4/22/91

Dear Dick,

I think I wrote you after George Lardner of the Washington Post was here and that we have a verbal agreement on a book. He left with much material and I just learned today had started working immediately by tapping a Washington source to which I'd directed him.

He also phoned me from Dallas, where among other things he expects to interview Oliver Stone. He'll be there about three days and then will write his story.

Aside from updating you my main purpose in writing is to tell you what he told me, that his editor, Ben Bradlee, agrees with me on the book! Likes it!

This has meaning and may forecast a syndication interest.

Having heard nothing from you I presume you've not yet or not been able to discuss this with your friend at S & S. I presume also because he made no mention of it and because of what I learned from the person to whom I'd directed him in Washington that Lardner has not yet spoken to Osnos. He spent five hours going over the records I directed him to yesterday and he'd read the script and half of my annotated copy of the Garrison book.

So, he's been working hard, a good sign. When after this hard work, including his days off, he told me today that it will be fun, I have no doubt at all that the book also will be great fun, aside from what interests me, being historically and politically a valuable and an important work, a rare combination. (He is Ring Lardner's grand nephew, has a light touch when he wants it, is skilled with ridicule, sarcasm, etc., and is one of the most experienced of reporters.)

I think he'll be up again after his story appears, as soon thereafter as he can.

Meanwhile, I've opened up a channel with a friend of the past who was closest to Garrison of all those who worked for him. He is no longer close to Garrison and I believe will help with the book. I did not tell him about it when we spoke a long time yesterday or when I wrote him after we spoke. I will be in touch again after the story appears. He asked me if I would write a book about my experiences there and I told him I would not but that I would help another. He has not been close to Garrison for years, volunteered that half of his time was spent in damage-control (an under-estimate!) and I got the clear impression that they are hardly friends. He admits that the book is fiction and in general gave me the impression that he is also disenchanted with Garrison personally. He declined to be used in the movie but knows all about it because he has a friend who has a part in it. He reflected the most detailed knowledge of the script so I think he has a copy. He has visited us (22 years ago!) and asked about the distance from the airports, so I think he may accept an invitation in connection with the book. See what this can mean to the book? By an odd coincidence in turning Stone down he used the description I did, Keystone Kops. I'm excited! This book will be a worthwhile best-seller! I could not be more confident of it! And I think it can and will be timely. Best to all, Harold